GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2509
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VACCINE FOR AIDS
KAILASH MEGHWAL;RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY;S. SAIDUZZAMAN

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian scientists at All India Institute of Medical Sciences have recently developed artificial virus of vaccine for AIDS;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that ICMR, Pune has developed AIDS vaccine;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government are aware that C type of HIV virus has been spreading in India; and

(f) if so, the action taken/being taken by the Government for developing C type of vaccine for controlling HIV virus?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) & (b) According to faculty members at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), scientists here are trying to develop DNA vaccines against the HIV-1 virus sub-type C. Efforts are being made to develop vaccine by utilizing
(i) Envelop Glyprotein gene (gp-120) DNA vaccine
(ii) Gag-gene DNA vaccine and
(iii) Pol-gene DNA vaccine.

(c) to (f) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) signed a Memorandum o Understanding (MOU) on 4th December, 2000, with the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) to promote and accelerate efforts to develop an indigenous AIDS vaccine that will address the strains of the HIV subtype C predominant in India.The Government of India, ICMR and IAVI agreement is based on a commitment towardscollaboration and transparency in vaccine trials for development of a vaccine.

The Modified Vaccinia Ankara (MVA) based HIV vaccine is being developed.It involves innumerable complex and complicated steps. The MVA has not reached the stage of clinical trial. This work is being carried out by two ICMR institutions namely, National AIDS Research Institute (NARI), Pune and National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases (NICED), Kolkata.

An Advisory Group has been constituted. It includes people living with HIV/AIDS, NGOs and several experts, especially those working on gender. The Advisory Group will advise Government in respect of all aspects of vaccine development and on issues of access such as; ethics of clinical trials; gender and human rights issues; information dissemination; development of guidelines and protocols to address stigma and exclusion of HIV/AIDS infected persons.